



# Alternatives to 911 for Mental Health and Quality of Life **Community Report-Back**

Sacramento County Department of Health Services  
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# Agenda

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Housekeeping & Introductory Remarks



Findings from Community Listening Sessions & Survey



Behavioral Health Services Proposal for Board of Supervisors Meeting on 2/24/21



Q&A

# Housekeeping

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- Presentation format, Q&A via chat
- If you would like to access a requested interpretation service, please type it in the chat:
  1. Real Time Captioning (RTC)
  2. Hmong
  3. Russian
- Please select the language via the globe on your computer here:

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# Introductory Remarks

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# Findings from Community Listening Sessions & Survey

# Overview of Community Listening Sessions & Survey

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- Questions
  1. What do you think the goals for a Mental Health and Quality of Life Response should be?
  2. What types of crisis situations would you want this team to respond to?
  3. How would you like to access this response?
  4. What do people experiencing these types of crises need?
    - What qualities and skills are important for the response team to have?
    - Who should be on the response team?
  5. What services should the response team be able to provide?
  6. What type of follow up support would you like to see?

# Participants

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- **568** individuals participated in a Listening Session event or the Community Input Survey
- Participant backgrounds related to Mental Health and Homelessness
  - **57% Friends or family members** of someone who has experienced a mental health crisis
  - **28% Friends or family members** of someone who has experienced homelessness
  - **25%** People who have **experienced a mental health crisis**
  - **20%** Behavioral health (BH) **provider or staff**
  - **3%** People who have **experienced homelessness**

# Goals for a Mental Health and Quality of Life Response

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- Safely **de-escalate** crises
- Provide linkages to **accessible and affordable mental health** resources to decrease repeat crises and emergency department visits
- Offer a **response team that does not include law enforcement staffing**
- Ensure the model is **community-based**
- **Decrease criminalization** of mental health and homelessness

*Participant quote: “Respect and kindness from a responder with primary expertise in mental health; not a first responder with primary expertise in criminal activity.”*

# Ideas for the Types of Crises the Response Should Address

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- Mental health/psychiatric
- Substance use
- Domestic violence and sexual assault
- People experiencing homelessness
- Other crises (e.g., welfare checks, child and vulnerable people protection, elder abuse)



# Requested Access to the Response Team

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- New **3-digit** emergency phone number that is independent from 911 to dispatch the mental health response
- “**No wrong door approach**” to access the response team through existing service phone numbers (e.g., 211, 311, and 911)
- Include **language interpretation** and ability to **access via a website**



# Suggested Response Team Composition

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- Mental health clinicians
- Peers with lived experience
- Social workers
- Medical clinicians

*Participant quote: “It’s incredibly important that the people who show up on these calls, look like normal people and talk like normal people. Having that peer support person with lived experience is important.”*

# Requested Response Team Skills & Expertise

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- De-escalation
- Trauma-informed
- Background in behavioral health
- Responsive to race, culture, gender & disability

*Participant quote: “Someone who is calm, approachable, knowledgeable about MH crises and empathetic. I worked in one of the most intensive outpatient settings in Sac County and deescalated everything under the sun with no harm done.”*



# Requested Crisis Services

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- Housing & shelter
- Mental health assessment & services
- Food, water & other survival needs
- Medical care & medication
- Crisis stabilization & respite centers

*Participant quote: “We need more affordable housing, employment training programs, and robust mental health and substance abuse programs. The lack of inventory of housing and services available is what leads to the issues needing alternatives to calls to 911.”*



# Suggested Follow Up Support

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- Ongoing follow up & case management to connect individuals to services and social support
- Transportation & financial assistance
- Wraparound services; including family & loved ones in the follow up planning
- Needs assessments for people experiencing homelessness

# Pilot Call Center and Mental Health Response Team Proposal - Purpose

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- Purpose:
  - Test the concept, accumulate data, assess operating issues and measure outcomes
  - Guide efforts to implement a fully operational 24 hour, 7 days a week program

# Pilot Call Center and Mental Health Response Team Proposal - Services

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- Services
  - Crisis intervention and de-escalation
  - Assess needs and risks
  - Create safety plans (including identifying and leveraging individual strengths and natural supports; coordinating with existing health providers; and linking consumers to ongoing services)

# Pilot Call Center and Mental Health Response Team Proposal - Staff

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- 16 staff
- Provide Countywide coverage during peak times in calls for service, Monday through Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.
- Full year cost of \$1,650,901
- Anticipated operations by July 1, 2021

# Proposed Pilot Call Center Details

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- Staffed by mental health professionals who would:
  - Triage consumers' level of need
  - Review behavioral health records
  - Conduct mental health assessments to determine the appropriate response

# Proposed Pilot Call Center Details cont.

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- Potential responses include:
  - Providing crisis intervention and de-escalation services over the phone
  - Dispatching a Mental Health Response Team
  - Connecting current clients to their existing behavioral health service providers
  - Referring clients to the Mental Health Urgent Care Clinic, Crisis Center Respite, and ongoing mental health and substance use services

# Proposed Pilot Call Center Details cont.

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- Access to Call Center
  - A separate, non-law enforcement 7-digit number
  - All phone numbers in the X11 series of numbers are in use



- 211 = Community Link
- 311 = Local Government – Service Information
- 411 = Directory Assistance
- 511 = CalTrans Information
- 611 = Phone assistance
- 711 = Telecommunication Relay Service
- 811 = Call Before You Dig
- 911 = Emergency

# Proposed Pilot Mental Health Response Team Details

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- 4 Mental Health Response Teams with Sr. Mental Health Counselors and Sr. Behavioral Health Peer Specialists
- Functions would include:
  - Provide in-person crisis intervention and de-escalation services
  - Assess needs and risks
  - Create safety plans (including identifying and leveraging individual strengths and natural supports; coordinating with existing health providers; and linking consumers to ongoing services)
  - Accessing Mobile Crisis Support Teams or other emergency responders if necessary

# Possible Future Full Implementation Plan

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- Additional Mental Health Response Teams with Senior Mental Health Counselors and Senior Behavioral Health Peer Specialists
- Functions and outcomes will be the same; expanded to 24/7 coverage countywide

# Next Steps

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Sacramento County Board  
of Supervisors to review  
and vote on the proposal  
on February 24, 2021  
at 2:30 p.m.

# Q & A

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Please type any  
questions in the chat

Thank you!